

**From:** Phil Adams [mailto:pcadams@thegrid.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 04, 2005 7:06 PM  
**To:** MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov  
**Subject:** MLPAComments: support of the Piedras Blancas area as an MLPA

Thank you for your hard work in protecting our precious marine resources. The creation of marine protected areas is of utmost importance. I am writing in support your consideration of the Piedras Blancas area as an MLPA.

The waters off Piedras Blancas are rich in marine life. The area between Point Sierra Nevada and San Simeon Point would be a good choice as a location for a protected area. That area is teeming with marine mammals. The northern elephant seal rookery has grown from a handful in 1990 to an estimated 14,000 using those beaches in 2005. Thousands of California sea lions haul out on the large rocks off Piedras Blancas as well as hundreds of harbor seals. A healthy number of Californian sea otters call that area home. Every year there are a few Steller sea lions who also haul out on the PB rocks. The official gray whale calf count is taken off Piedras Blancas because it is such a desirable location for viewing the cow/calf pairs on their northbound migration. The number of bird species seen off the PB area is astonishing (see [www.werc.usgs.gov/pb/birds.html](http://www.werc.usgs.gov/pb/birds.html)).

Because of the abundance of marine mammals in the Piedras Blancas area there is a fast growing related tourist industry. Every year hundreds of thousands of people flock to the vista point south of Piedras Blancas to view the elephant seals. The number of visitors attracted to the area will only increase with the recent addition of adjoining land to the State Park system and to increased visitation to the Piedras Blancas Light Station. A bill proposed by Lois Capps will designate Point Piedras Blancas as an Outstanding Natural Area. What all this means is that hundreds of thousands of people every year will be standing on the bluffs looking out to sea. The overwhelming majority of those people are there to experience and appreciate wildlife in a natural setting. They are shocked and horrified at viewing harassment of marine life and unfortunately some fishermen do harass marine mammals - certainly not all but enough to make an unfavorable impression on the general public. Tourism is a major business along the Central Coast.

The area surrounding Point Piedras Blancas would be a wonderful choice for an MLPA for many reasons. I would love to see the area from Point Sierra Nevada to San Simeon Point and out at least 2-3 miles designated as an MLPA. It would be good for the fish, good for the marine mammals, and good for the visiting public. And it would be good for the fishermen who would benefit from the establishment of MPLAs in the long run.

Thank you,  
Carole Adams  
Cambria, CA